

## CLAIMS

### What is claimed is:

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1. A method of conducting a game of chance, comprising:  
providing at least one gaming machine adapted to be operably coupled with at least one display,  
said at least one gaming machine comprising a random number generator configured for  
producing a plurality of outcomes including at least one specific outcome;  
providing at least one display configured to exhibit at least one group of cells, each cell in said at  
least one group of cells earmarkable with a designator of at least one gaming machine  
responsive to an occurrence of said at least one specific outcome on said at least one  
gaming machine; and  
earmarking a cell of said at least one group of cells with said designator responsive to said  
specific outcome resulting from play on said at least one gaming machine.
  2. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining at least one payout based  
upon a number of earmarked cells of said at least one group of cells.
  3. The method of claim 2, wherein said at least one gaming machine comprises a  
plurality of gaming machines, and wherein said designator comprises a unique identifier for each  
gaming machine of said plurality of gaming machines.
  4. The method of claim 3, wherein said determining at least one payout comprises  
apportioning said payout among gaming machines of said plurality according to a number of  
each of said unique identifiers in said earmarked cells of said at least one group of cells.
  5. The method of claim 4, further comprising distributing said at least one payout to  
gaming machines of said plurality of gaming machines according to said number of each of said  
unique identifiers in said earmarked cells.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one group of cells comprises two or more rows of cells.

7. The method of claim 6, further comprising associating an award value with each row of said two or more rows of cells.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing said at least one group of cells as an group of playing card indicia and providing a playing card indicia of said group of playing card indicia for each cell of said at least one group of cells.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising configuring said at least one gaming machine for playing draw poker.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said at least group of cells comprises four rows of cells, each row of cells comprising a row of playing card indicia, each row of playing card indicia comprising a different suit.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein each different suit of said playing card indicia comprises a hand including a Royal Flush.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said earmarking a cell comprises earmarking a playing card indicia.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein earmarking said playing card indicia further comprises crowning said playing card indicia.

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14. A method of conducting a game of chance, comprising:  
providing a plurality of gaming machines, each gaming machine of said plurality comprising a random number generator configured for producing a plurality of outcomes including at least one specific outcome;  
providing at least one display configured to exhibit at least two rows of cells, each cell in said at least two rows of cells earmarkable with at least one unique designator of a gaming machine of said plurality of gaming machines, each gaming machine of said plurality of gaming machines having associated therewith at least one respective unique designator;  
exhibiting said at least two rows of cells on said at least one display and earmarking at least one cell with a said at least one unique designator respectively associated with a gaming machine of said plurality responsive to each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome on a gaming machine of said plurality; and  
determining at least one payout associated with play on at least one gaming machine of said plurality according to a number of each of said at least one unique designator in said earmarked cells.

15. The method of claim 14, further comprising associating an award value with each row of said two or more rows of cells.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising associating differing award values with at least two rows of said two or more rows of cells.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising apportioning a payout for a row of said two or more rows of cells based upon a said award value associated with said row.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising distributing said payout responsive to earmarking all cells within said row of said two or more rows of cells.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein determining at least one payout comprises apportioning said at least one payout according to a number of said unique identifiers in earmarked cells within said row.

20. The method of claim 14, further comprising correlating said at least one specific outcome with a row of said two or more rows of cells.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein correlating comprises correlating an indicia of said at least one specific outcome with said row.

22. The method of claim 14, further comprising providing an animated element associated with each row of said two or more rows of cells exhibited on said at least one display and moving said animated element to a successive cell of one of said rows responsive to each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome on a gaming machine of said plurality.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein providing said animated element comprises providing at least one of a human figurine, an animal figurine, or a vehicle.

24. The method of claim 22, further comprising determining said at least one payout when said animated element advances to an end cell of a row of said two or more rows of cells.

25. The method of claim 14, further comprising configuring each row of said two or more rows of cells as a ladder having rungs defining each cell of said two or more rows of cells.

26. The method of claim 25, further comprising providing an animated element on a rung of said rungs defining each said cell.

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27. The method of claim 26, further comprising moving an animated element to another rung of said rungs responsive to each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome on a gaming machine of said plurality.

28. The method of claim 27, further comprising determining said at least one payout when a said animated element moves to an end rung of a ladder.

29. The method of claim 14, wherein said earmarking is effected sequentially in successive adjacent cells in a row of said two or more rows of cells.

30. The method of claim 14, wherein said earmarking is effected randomly in cells of a row of said two or more rows of cells.

31. The method of claim 14, further comprising configuring said plurality of gaming machines for playing a game of chance selected from the group consisting of reel slot machine games, poker games, blackjack games, keno games, lotto games and bingo games.

32. The method of claim 14, further comprising configuring each row of said two or more rows of cells as a group of playing card indicia and providing a playing card indicia of said group of playing card indicias for each cell.

33. The method of claim 34, further comprising configuring said plurality of gaming machines for playing draw poker.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein said two or more rows of cells comprise four rows of cells, each row of cells comprising a row of playing card indicia, each row of playing card indicia comprising a different suit.

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35. The method of claim 34, wherein each different suit of said playing card indicia comprises a hand including a Royal Flush.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein said earmarking a cell earmarking a playing card indicia.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein earmarking said playing card indicia comprises crowning said playing card indicia.

38. A method of conducting a game of chance, comprising:  
in each of a plurality of plays of a game of chance, randomly generating an outcome for the game of chance, the outcome being one of a plurality of outcomes including at least one specific outcome;  
displaying at least one group of cells, each cell in said at least one group of cells earmarkable with a designator responsive to a player of the game of chance achieving said at least one specific outcome; and  
earmarking a cell of said at least one group of cells with said designator responsive to each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome.

39. The method of claim 38, further comprising determining at least one payout in relation to a number of earmarked cell of said at least one group of cells.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein said designator comprises a unique identifier for each player of a plurality of players of the game of chance.

41. The method of claim 40, wherein said determining at least one payout comprises apportioning said at least one payout according to said number of each of said unique identifiers in said earmarked cells.

42. The method of claim 41, further comprising distributing said at least one payout among said players of said plurality according to said players of said plurality according to said number of each of said unique identifiers in said earmarked cells.

43. The method of claim 38, wherein said at least one group of cells comprises two or more rows of cells.

44. The method of claims 43, further comprising providing an award value associated with each row of said tow or more rows of cells.

45. The method of claim 38, further comprising configuring said at least one group of cells as a group of playing card indicia and providing a playing card indicia of said group of playing card indicias for each cell of said at least one group of cells.

46. The method of claim 38, wherein said game of chance comprises draw poker.

47. The method of claim 46, wherein said at least one group of cells comprises four rows of cells, each row of cells comprising a row of playing card indicia, each row of playing card indicia comprising a different suit.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein each different suit of said playing card indicia comprises a hand including a Royal Flush.

49. The method of claim 48, wherein said earmarking a cell comprises earmarking a playing card indicia.

50. The method of claim 49, wherein earmarking said playing card indicia comprises crowning said playing card indicia.

51. A system for playing a game of chance, comprising:  
a plurality of gaming machines configured for play of a game of chance, each gaming machine of said plurality having an associated random number generator configured to randomly generate a plurality of outcomes, including at least one specific outcome, of the game of chance and each gaming machine of the plurality further having associated therewith a unique designator; and

at least one display device operably coupled to said plurality of gaming machines, said at least one display device being configured to exhibit at least one group of cells, each cell in said at least one group of cells earmarkable with a unique designator associated with a gaming machine of said plurality responsive to each occurrence of the at least one specific outcome from play of said game of chance thereon.

52. The system of claim 51, wherein said at least one group of cells comprises two or more rows of cells.

53. The system of claim 52, further comprising a plurality of potential awards displayed on said at least one display device, wherein a potential award of said plurality of potential awards is associated with at least one row of said two or more rows of cells.

54. The system of claim 53, wherein said system is configured to pay a said potential award responsive to earmarking all cells in an associated row of said two or more rows of cells.

55. The system of claim 54, wherein said at least one display device is configured to display said two or more rows of cells.

56. The system of claim 55, where said ladders comprise rungs separating cells of each row of said two or more rows of cells.

57. The system of claim 56, wherein said at least one display is further configured to exhibit an advanceable animated element displayed on at least one rung of said rungs and said system is further configured to cause said at least one advanceable animated element to move to a different rung responsive to each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome from play of said game of chance.

58. The system of claim 51, wherein said at least one display is further configured to exhibit an advanceable animated element displayed on at least one cell of said at least one group of cells and said system is further configured to cause said at least one advanceable animated element to move to a different cell responsive to each occurrence of said at least one specific outcome from play of said game of chance.

59. The system of claim 51, wherein said plurality of gaming machines is configured as a bank of gaming machines and said at least one display device is positioned to be viewable from any gaming machine of said bank of gaming machines.

60. The system of claim 59, wherein said bank of gaming machines comprises at least five gaming machines.

61. The system of claim 51, wherein said display device is positioned to be centrally located with respect to said plurality of gaming machines.

62. The system of claim 51, wherein each gaming machine of said plurality of gaming machines is configured for playing a game of chance selected from the group consisting of reel slot machine games, poker games, blackjack games, keno games, lotto games and bingo games.

63. The system of claim 40, where said at least one display device is operably coupled to each gaming machine of said plurality of gaming machines via at least one of the Internet, a Wide Area Network, or a Local Area Network.